A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE ORDINATION OF THE

REV. JOSHUA BRADLEY, B. A.

Ordained Colleague Paſtor with the Reverend GARDNER THURSTON, in the ſecond Baptiſt Church of Chriſt in *NEWPORT*, RHODE-ISLAND, on the 13th of May, A. D. 1801.

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"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." JESUS CHRIST.

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To the 2d Baptiſt Church and Congregation in Newport.

THE many avocations in which I have been engaged, have prevented my complying with your requeſt, for a copy of the Sermon for publication, before this time. As I preached it, at the time, without its being written at length, you will probably find ſome ſentiments enlarged, and others curtailed. The ſubſtance and arrangement of the diſcourſe will be found the ſame, as nearly as could be recollected. In hope a divine bleſſing may attend this humble attempt, to delineate the character of a Miniſter of Chriſt, I am, with ſentiments of reſpect,

Your Servant in the Goſpel,

The AUTHOR.

June 1801.

ORDINATION SERMON, &c.

1 Corinthians 4 and 1.

Let a man ſo account of us, as of the Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the myſteries of GOD.

WHEN the everlaſting doors of heaven were opened to receive the riſen and triumphant king of glory, captivity was led captive, and gifts were received for men. Thoſe gifts were eſpecially deſigned to advance the Redeemers kingdom in the world, and to diſplay the glory of the great king of ſaints. Extraordinary or miraculous gifts were given to the Apoſtles, as the firſt preachers of an aſcended Lord and Saviour, to confirm their inſpired commiſſion, and ſeal the truth of their Divine Maſter's conqueſt over death and the grave. Conformably to their commiſſion, and ſpecial qualifications, they *go forth* in the name and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, preaching the goſpel, and working miracles, to the aſtoniſhment and confutation of their Lord's enemies, but to the great joy of his diſciples and friends. When the Apoſtles had fulfilled their miniſtry, the ſpecial gift of miracles ceaſed, as no longer neceſſary, to authenticate that goſpel, which

they had preached, and now ſtood confirmed by ſuch plenary evidence.

The Lord Jeſus gave alſo a diverſity of gifts, for the edification of *his body, the church*, which were to be continued in the church, till his ranſomed family ſhall be completely united, and perfected in the manſions of glory. Among thoſe gifts were Paſtors, or Teachers, or Elders, which are thoſe perſons ſpoken of in the text, as *Miniſters of Chriſt, and Stewards of the myſteries of God.*

The Apoſtle in the preceeding chapter, corrects the miſtaken zeal of the church, for thoſe individual miniſters who had been inſtrumental, among them in teaching them ſalvation. While one had a particular attachment to one, and another to another, and hence one ſaid he was of Paul, another of Apollos, &c. Paul pertinently aſks the queſtion, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but miniſters by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" In the cloſe of the chapter, he ſhows the impropriety of glorying in men, for all the miniſters, and bleſſings which they enjoyed were the gift of God. Therefore the glory ſhould all be aſcribed to him, who was the ſum and center of all bleſſings.—Yet leſt they ſhould miſtake his deſign, as to the opinion, which they ſhould entertain for the miniſters of Chriſt, he obſerves as in the text, "Let a man ſo account of us, as miniſters of Chriſt," &c. Let them be properly

eſteemed in their places, or according to their characters, " *Eſteemed in love for their work's ſake,*" *as ſtewards of the myſteries of God.*

In further ſpeaking from the text, it is propoſed

I. To conſider ſome things ſuppoſed of the office of miniſters of Chriſt.

II. Their buſineſs or employment as Stewards: and

III. The qualifications neceſſary for them.

I. Their office ſuppoſes a houſe or family. This houſe is the church, over which Jeſus Chriſt preſides as head, and employs domeſtics to tranſact the neceſſary buſineſs of ſerving and furniſhing the family with ſupplies from the maſter. The Apoſtle drawing a parallel between Moſes and Jeſus Chriſt, ſaith " Moſes verily was faithful in all his houſe as a ſervant, for a teſtimony of thoſe things which were to be ſpoken after; but Chriſt as a ſon over his own houſe; whoſe houſe are we, if we hold faſt the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end, Heb. 3. 5 and 6." Paul alſo giving directions to Timothy his ſon in the goſpel, ſaith, " But if I tarry long, that thou mayeſt know how thou oughteſt to behave thyſelf in the houſe of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." 1 Tim. 3, and 15.

2d, It ſuppoſes they are called into this ſervice by the maſter of the houſe, however volun-

tarily they may enter into it. For *no man taketh this honor to himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.* Hence they are responsible for their conduct to the master, who has committed to them a dispensation of the gospel, by the holy ghost. Therefore the inspired Apostle said of himself, "For if I yet seek to please men, then am I not the servant of Christ." They are called to this service, and are not at liberty to preach themselves, "but Christ Jesus the Lord," and themselves "as servants for Jesus' sake."

3d, It supposes their work and business assigned them as servants and stewards. They do not enter this service to dictate and lord it over the consciences of God's heritage, and act according to their own will and fancy; but to attend to the directions of the great head of the church. The Lord Jesus cautioned his chosen twelve against a domineering temper, when he "called them unto him, and said, ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: But whosoever will be great among you let him be your minister. And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant," Matthew 20 and 25, &c.

4th, As they are servants and stewards, their office supposes them on wages; which consists in the honor conferred upon them—the

enjoyments given them—and the proviſion made for their ſupport.

It is a great honor conferred upon them by their being counted faithful, putting them into the miniſtry; and intruſting them with the myſteries of God. Theſe myſteries, are thoſe truths of religion, which are hidden or ſecreted from the carnal world, but known by the diſciples of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. According to this declaration, when his diſciples came to him and aſked him, why he ſpake to the multitudes in parables. "*He anſwered, and ſaid unto them, becauſe it is given unto you to know the myſteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.* Math. 13, and 11. They are honored by their maſter with a knowledge of his divine will. "For the ſecret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and unto them he ſhows his covenant." Not to conclude from the above expreſſions, that they comprehend all truth, or fully underſtand the nature or extent of thoſe prophecies which remain unfulfilled. But they are inſtructed into thoſe goſpel truths, which were kept hid from paſt ages, and from the preſent worldly wiſe and prudent, who reject the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

They have alſo the pleaſure of intercourſe with their great Lord and maſter. For he has declared he would be with them "always even unto the end of the world." He is with them, not only by his power to protect, but alſo by his

grace and ſpirit, to comfort, inſtruct, and make them inſtrumental in the eſtabliſhment and edification of his family. And when ſucceſsful in winning ſouls to their maſter or in the edifying his diſciples in the faith, they have a crown of rejoicing, "in the preſence of the Lord Jeſus."

Their maſter has alſo made proviſion for the temporal ſupport of his ſervants. They are called by Chriſt, "laborers: And the Apoſtle Paul ſaith, We are laborers together with God." 1 Cor. 3 and 9. When the Lord Jeſus ſent out the ſeventy diſciples, two by two, to preach the "kingdom of God," he directed them to go, and receive their temporal ſupport, from thoſe to whom they miniſtered. *For the laborer is worthy of his hire.* Luke 10, 7. The Apoſtle alſo in his firſt letter to Tim. chap. 5 and 17, 18, directs that "the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honor, eſpecially they who *labor* in word and doctrine. For the ſcripture ſaith, "Thou ſhalt not muzzle the ox, that treadeth out the corn. And the laborer is worthy of his reward." Theſe plain paſſages of divine truth are ſo concluſive, that we muſt be wilfully blind, not to acknowledge the duty of a people, who are miniſtered to in ſpiritual things, to alſo miniſter in return their carnal things. The proviſion here made, and the directions given by the great maſter of the family, teaches what is the ſervants due, and the people's duty. It excludes the abſurd and unſcriptural

notion, of their being ſupported, or maintained by alms giving, while they are in diſcharge of their truſt.

We now proceed,

II. To conſider ſome part of their employment, &c.

1. As ſervants of Chriſt and ſtewards of the myſteries of God, they are to take heed to themſelves and their doctrine. When the Apoſtle Paul was on the point of leaving his brethern, he called for the elders of the church, and charged them "to take heed" to themſelves, and "all the flock over which the holy ghoſt had made them overſeers;" and to feed the church of God, which he had purchaſed with his own blood," Acts 20 and 28. Peter alſo exhorted the "elders to feed the flock of God." They are to feed them "with the ſincere milk of the word." Hence they are to be fed with food of their maſter's providing. They are not to ſerve them with human inventions, or the traditions of men; but with plain bible truth, as beſt ſuited to nouriſh the ſpiritual appetites of the family. When God's word is diſpenſed by the ſteward, and eaten by the believers, it becomes "the joy and rejoicing of their hearts."

2. As their buſineſs is highly confidential, and the treaſure committed to theſe earthen veſſels, is of infinite value. Their buſineſs is to diſpenſe the treaſure according to their maſter's

expreſs direction. They will "not take the children's bread and give it unto dogs." But as they are furniſhed for the uſe of the family, as "wiſe ſtewards, whom the Lord has made ruler over his houſehold," they will "give them their portion of meat in due ſeaſon." Luke 12 & 41 to 49.—This part of their buſineſs involves the duty of preaching "the word, in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon." Neglecting no ſuitable or proper opportunity of adminiſtering to the family thoſe warnings, reproofs, and conſolations, which the goſpel enjoins and furniſhes. They are rightly to divide the word of truth. To give the certain ſound of the trumpet.—To keep nothing back that their maſter has given them, for the profit of the family, that they may like an eminent preacher of ancient days, have reaſon to rejoice, "that they have not ſhunned to declare the whole counſel of God, "and are pure from the blood of all men."

3. Their employment as good ſtewards, is to make a proper application of their Lord's goods, according to that direction, 1 Peter 4 and 10. "As every man hath received the gift, even ſo miniſter the ſame one to another as good ſtewards of the manifold grace of God." They will therefore make a juſt diſcrimination of characters, in preſenting the promiſes and conſolations of the goſpel to whom they belong.

4. It will be the duty of a good ſteward to adminiſter the ordinances of baptiſm and the

Lord's ſupper to ſuch only as the maſter has deſcribed, as being entitled to them. That he may err in judgment, as to the ſubjects is admitted. Yet it becomes him according to the beſt of his judgment, to do all things according to the pattern and directions given him by the perfect Ruler in Zion.

5. It is part of his buſineſs to look into the ſtate of the flock. To comfort the feeble minded. To "ſpeak comfortable unto Jeruſalem, and ſay unto her that her warfare is accompliſhed." Hence the habitations of diſtreſs and ſorrow, will require his attentions and viſits. Theſe viſits will not be formal viſits of ceremony. Here he will "weep with them that weep and endeavor to alleviate their ſorrows, by exhibiting the goodneſs and benevolence of his divine maſter. In fine, he is to mark the conduct of his Lord, and walk in his imitable ſteps, as his pattern.

6. His employment as a ruler in the houſe of God, is to lead and guide the family, by the rule given him in the divine word. This rule will preſerve him from aſſuming a lordly juriſdiction over the conſciences, or conduct, of his brethren. But being affectionately deſirous of their good, he will be gentle among them, even as a nurſe cheriſheth her children. 1 Theſſ. 2. and 7.

7. A ſpecial part of his buſineſs is to be careful in his own life and converſation, that it

be "as becometh the goſpel of Chriſt." The wiſe man informs us, that one ſinner deſtroyeth much good. And a miniſter who is careleſs, and vain in his deportment & converſation, contradicts his profeſſion, and deſtroys the benefit of his preaching.—His ſtewardſhip will not make him moroſe or unſocial, but will excite his circumſpection as to his intercourſe with ſociety, that he may not be guilty of ſuch conduct, as to bring reproach upon the doctrine he promulgates.

This is connected with the following heads, viz.

III. Qualifications for this office.

1. His ſpiritual qualifications are of the higheſt importance, experimental or perſonal religion, without which it will be impoſſible for him to underſtand any part of his buſineſs. By experimental religion, is underſtood that ſincere, hearty love to God, and attachment to his cauſe, which originates from the ſpirit of God changing the vile, ſinful heart, and moulding it into the temper of the goſpel. Without this temper of the goſpel, his buſineſs will be irkſome, and of conſequence, it will be neglected.

The word of God declares "the carnal mind to be enmity againſt God, and not ſubject to his law." It is prepoſterous to ſuppoſe the Great Head of the church employs his enemies as ſtewards, to feed his family. After the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt, he enquired of Peter

repeatly whether he loved him, and upon his anſwering in the affirmative, Chriſt directed him to feed his ſheep and lambs. It is plainly inferred from this converſation, that if he did not love him, he was not qualified to feed the flock. For "the huſbandman muſt firſt be partaker of the fruits." Our Lord alſo ſpeaking to his diſciples, of the Phariſees, ſaid, "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both ſhall fall into the ditch." Matthew 15, and 14. How ſhould he know the neceſſities of the family when he has never felt them himſelf? Or what fellow feeling can he have for the diſtreſſes of the family, when he is wholly a ſtranger to their ſpiritual trials, and afflictions?

A ſtranger to experimental religion, aſſuming the character of a ſteward, will be a calamity, inſtead of a bleſſing to a people. They who are "wolves in ſheep's clothing," will be more likely to diſpenſe the inventions of men, than the pure word of God: Or will ſo mix poiſon with truth, as beſt ſuited to their own taſte, that it will injure inſtead of nouriſhing the family of Chriſt. For the inſtitutions of heaven, they will be likely to bring in the unfounded devices and doctrines of men.

2. Connected with ſincere, hearty love to God, a large experience in religion, is peculiarly neceſſary to enable the ſteward to furniſh ſupplies, ſuited to the various ages, characters, and

conditions in the family. The greater his acquaintance with his own heart, and the true nature of ſin, the more capable he will be to develope and expoſe the true nature of ſin, to ſhow the abſurdity of truſting in hearts ſo pregnant with evil. The maſter of the houſe frequently ſuffers his ſervants to be ſeverely tried and tempted, that they may not be ignorant of ſatan's devices, and to qualify them to comfort thoſe who are under ſimilar trials, or temptations. The Apoſtle Peter was left to be ſifted with the ſevereſt temptations of ſatan. Jeſus Chriſt appears to permit his temptation, with a particular view to the good of the church. Hence he told Peter when he was "converted," to "ſtrengthen" his "brethren." In this trial of the Apoſtle, he undoubtedly learned much of his own weakneſs, the power and ſubtilty of his great adverſary, and the ſuperior power, goodneſs, and grace of his divine maſter, in reclaiming him, and not ſuffering his "faith to fail." How prepared was Peter by this trial to warn his brethren of the danger of truſting in themſelves, and to point them to a Saviour in their temptations as able and willing to ſuccour them. This experience is not equal in degrees in all the ſtewards. Some have larger, and ſome leſs experience of thoſe trials, as the Lord deſigns them for ſuch ſervices in his church, as it pleaſes him. Their afflictions will open the avenues of their heart to a ſympathetic concern, with the afflicted and tempted family. Having themſelves needed

conſolation, they will enter feelingly into the ſtate of the flock, and feed them with ſuch "milk and meat," as they have perſonally received from the maſter.

3. Natural ability for the employment, is a neceſſary qualification. The preceding obſervations ſufficiently ſhow, that human ſcience, abſtractedly conſidered, will never qualify for the miniſterial office, without grace. No original ſtrength of genius, without love to God, will diſpoſe or fit for the work. Yet there is a natural aptitude for teaching, which cannot be wholly acquired, but may be much improved, or increaſed by diligent attention. Grace in the heart, prepares for glory in heaven, but adds no new faculties to the mind. It turns the faculties into a new channel of employment, and prepares for ſpiritual enjoyments.

Timothy was directed to "ſtudy to approve" himſelf "a workman that" needed "not to be aſhamed." "Till I come give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, &c." By theſe directions of the Apoſtle, it may be inferred that thoſe gifts qualifying for the miniſtry, may be improved, by proper uſe and attention.

4. "Moreover it is required in a ſteward, that a man be found faithful." This buſineſs is a ſpecial truſt. A diſpenſation of the goſpel is committed to him. And he is intruſted with the moſt precious of all treaſures. It is neceſ-

ſary that he be faithful, that he does not waſte his Lord's goods, by burying his "talent in the earth;" or neglecting the duties of his office.

Being put in truſt with the moſt precious of all treaſures, faithfulneſs is requiſite, that he may "not give that which is holy unto dogs." But juſtly diſcriminate between the precious and the vile. To apply the promiſes of God's word, to thoſe characters to whom they are expreſsly given. And to give the trumpet a certain ſound, that ſouls may be duly appriſed of their danger and duty, and prepare to meet God in judgment.

This is a buſineſs of all others, the moſt important. The welfare of immortal ſouls, is connected with it. It is a buſineſs that is attached to eternity. All other buſineſs expires with the ſhort duration of time. But "they who turn many to righteouſneſs, ſhall ſhine as the ſtars for ever and ever." It follows that a buſineſs of ſuch magnitude in its cauſe and effects, calls for the greateſt fidelity in the miniſter of Chriſt.

Fidelity in the ſteward will make him have a "ſingle eye" to his maſter's honor and glory. Hence he will ſet his "face as a flint," amidſt the reproaches of ſcoffing infidels. Neither will he ſeek to pleaſe men, or unduly court their empty applauſes if it be done, at the expence of truth. His maſter's honor and approbation are of infinite importance in his eſtimation. How ſolemn the thought in the breaſt of the chriſtian ſteward! Ere long I muſt appear before my di-

vine maſter, who will require an account of my ſtewardſhip! Have I diſchared the high truſt in ſuch a manner, as to "give an account with joy and not with grief?" Has the glory of my bleſſed Lord and maſter, been the governing principle in my life? Have I faithfully, and ſteadily adminiſtred the word of life by preaching Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified, concealing no part of truth as far as I have known my Lord's will? Have I been careful to lay hands ſuddenly on no man? Have I been guarded in my perſonal conduct leſt I ſhould wound the honor of my maſter? Reflections like theſe muſt ſolemnize the faithful ſervant of Chriſt, and perhaps bring into view ſome omiſſions, which now call for doubling his diligence.

We proceed to ſome reflections upon the preceding diſcourſe:

We learn that the chriſtian miniſtry is a ſpecial bleſſing, and attaches to it conſequences of the greateſt importance. It ſhould excite our adoration and thankſgiving to God, for this bleſſing, and engage our diligent attendance upon it, when in our power. A proper view of the rich treaſure of goſpel truth, when faithfully diſpenſed, would remove many frivolous excuſes that are often made for neglecting public worſhip. If men in general were promiſed, not poſitively, but poſſibly, they ſhould receive ſome great temporal advantage, by attending at a certain appointed place, what crouds would throng the place? Shall food for immortal ſouls

be neglected ?—Why are ſo many indifferent to the word of God ? Is it not ſuited to the real and piercing wants of dying ſinners ? Yes. Let the practice of the hungry and thirſty ſoul ſpeak. Obſtacles that once were inſurmountable, are now eaſily removed, in flying to the houſe of God.

David when deprived of it, conſidered it as of the firſt importance. "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts ! My ſoul longeth, yea fainteth for the courts of my God."

From the obſervations which have been made, let thoſe who enjoy the priviledge of the miniſtry, learn their duty to encourage by their prayers, the ſervants of Jeſus Chriſt. And at the ſame time, withhold not from the faithful ſteward, his juſt and reaſonable maintainance. If a people find their preacher ſeeking theirs and not them, they may reject him : But if he is ſeeking them, and their real ſpiritual good, the people who neglect this duty towards him, are rejecting a poſitive injunction of Almighty God.

We are alſo taught, that the faithful and attentive miniſter has ſufficient employment to occupy his whole time. Hence Timothy was directed "to give himſelf wholly to the work, that his profiting might appear unto all."

I ſhall now addreſs a few words to the Candidate.

My Dear Young Brother,

The work to which you are this day devoting yourſelf, in this public manner, is of all

other employments, the moſt arduous, honorable and important, in which it is poſſible for a mortal to be engaged. Perhaps you are ready to ſay "Who is ſufficient for theſe things?" Such an enquiry is certainly proper. For if you did not feel the weight and importance of the work, you would be unqualified for it.—But that word, by which the man of God is thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works, declares your ſufficiency to be of God. Let this ſupport you, for the great maſter ſaith to all his faithful ſtewards, "Lo I am with you always." Your trials may be numerous and great, if they are, they will be neceſſary, and as your maſter ſendeth none of his ſervants a warfare at their own charges, you may humbly hope for ſtrength in the day of adverſity. Yea "count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations," or trials. Faith in God, has done wonders as you ſee in the 11th of Heb. He is the ſame covenant keeping God, and Saviour, to all generations. Faith in *Him* will produce as great wonders now as in any paſt period. For it "is the victory that overcometh the world."

We feel with you, my brother, that the work is great, and ſolemnly important, in which you are engaged. The beſt way to fulfil your office, and to preach acceptably to God, and the ſouls of dying men, is to live near to God. To enter the public worſhip of God, from having had private communion and intercourſe with him,

will beſt qualify you to ſpeak as in his Holy preſence.

We ſincerely rejoice, in ſeeing young men raiſed up, to unite with and fill the places of our aged and pious Fathers, who have "borne the burden and heat of the day." May the days of your miniſtry, like that of our dear aged, and reſpected Brother, whoſe heart dilates with joy in ſeeing one to go in and out before this church and congregation, be crowned with uſefulneſs, to the people of your charge, and with heavenly honor to yourſelf. "We commend you to God and the word of his grace."

Permit me to addreſs the church of Chriſt in this place. The work of your Paſtor is indeed great, and while he is watching for your ſouls, as one that muſt give an account of his ſtewardſhip, let me remind you that a great duty is incumbent on you towards him. If an inſpired Apoſtle deſired the prayers of his brethren, ſurely the ſucceeding miniſters of Chriſt need the prayers of their brethren. Let him then have your fervent petitions to his and your mutual maſter, for all thoſe gifts and graces, which are eſſential to his uſefulneſs and your ſpiritual edification. This is a bleſſed mean by which both preacher and people are benefited.

Let me alſo caution you againſt troubling him with every little difference that may ariſe. We are in a world of trial. Imperfection is the common lot of the beſt of men. But then it becomes us all to aim at the mark for the prize

of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.—He will need your ſupport. Hold up his hands by prayer, and a conſtant attention on the word preached. Neglect not the aſſembling of yourſelves together. May the God of peace bleſs you together, that you may be edified, and built up in faith and holineſs, and that he may rejoice in the day of Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, that he has not run in vain, nor labored in vain.

The Congregation who meets in this houſe for religious worſhip, will remember that the faithful ſervant of Chriſt, will rejoice in ſeeing them brought to ſerve and love the ſame bleſſed maſter.—Your ſouls are precious, yea of infinite worth! To have them ſaved in the day when the jewels of Chriſt are collected together, is an object of the ſteward's great concern. May it be alſo your great and chief concern, to flee to the Saviour and lay hold on eternal life.

Now to the only wiſe God, who brought again from the dead, our Lord Jeſus, the great ſhepherd and biſhop of ſouls; to Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, the One God, be glory, dominion, power and praiſe forever and ever, Amen.

Charge, by the Rev. JOHN PITMAN.

DEAR BROTHER,

The tranſactions of this day, teſtify that we believe that Chriſt Jeſus our Lord hath enabled thee, for that he counted thee faithful, putting thee into the miniſtry. The work is great and intereſting to thyſelf, and others. Thou art placed as on the walls of Zion; her welfare muſt be principally

thy care, as it is intimately connected with the honor of Chriſt. Nothing proclaims the glory of the Redeemer more than the church in the exerciſe of the authority he has inveſted in her, while ſhe walks in his commands, and obſerves his ordinances. 'Tis then ſhe appears fair as the moon, clear as the ſun, and terrible as an army with banners, and preſents to Angels the manifold wiſdom of God. To have a name and a place in her, muſt then be honorable and advantageous. Of what importance then muſt it be, to be a leader, guide, or overſeer, *to feed this flock of God which he hath purchaſed with his own blood?* We may truly ſay with Paul, *who is ſufficient for theſe things.* But as the great Shephard has aſcended on high, and given gifts to men, even the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell amongſt us; as he poſſeſſes all power in heaven and in earth, and has commiſſioned ſome of his diſciples to go forth, and proclaim ſalvation to a guilty world, we may depend on his ſupport, and go with courage, relying on that promiſe, *Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.* Truſting therefore, that God has called thee by his grace, to the knowledge and love of the truth as it is in Chriſt Jeſus, that thou art conſcious it is thy duty to Chriſt, to his church, and to poor ſinners, to take upon thee this important employment to which thou haſt now been ſolemnly ſet apart. Permit me to diſcharge the duty aſſigned me, at this time, to give thee the ſolemn and important charge.

I therefore charge thee in the preſence of God, whoſe eye penetrates the inmoſt receſſes of the ſoul—before the Lord Jeſus Chriſt who ſhall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom,—and before the elect Angels, who are guardians to the church, and rejoice at the repentance of every ſinner. Preach the word, be inſtant in ſeaſon, out of ſeaſon, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long ſuffering and doctrine. Take heed to thyſelf in all things, ſhowing thyſelf a pattern of good works. Much depends on thy conduct, the eyes of all men are upon thee, the pious with ardent wiſhes and prayers for thy welfare and uſefulneſs; the enemies of our holy religion, watching for thy halting, ſeeking occaſion to wound thy character, and reproach the glorious cauſe thou haſt engaged to maintain. I charge thee, be careful in the choice of thy companions. A man's aſſo-

ciates soon give a cast to his deportment. Thou mayest as well expect to take fire in thy bosom, and not be burned, as to associate with the immoral and profane, and not become trifling in thy conduct, and embarrassed in thy preaching. The situation in which thou art now placed, will expose thee to all classes of company; the poor, and the rich. The former, claims thy first attention, as they are most numerous, for God has chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom. They will most need thy instruction and sympathy in their complicated trials, and if thy circumstances will admit, to open the hand of charity, if not, it will be in thy power to recommend them to others. When thou art in company with the opulent, take the Lord Jesus Christ as thy pattern, who, on such occasions, ever taught the most useful and important lessons, and conducted in such a manner as made it manifest, that his father's honor was near his heart. Take heed to thy doctrine. Remember that the everlasting love of God, is the foundation of all our hope. *God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life.* Bear in mind the doctrine of the depravity of the human heart; this reflects the highest glory on the Redeemer, who can save to the uttermost. Never forget the great atonement: That Jesus Christ was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Insist much on the effectual operation of the spirit of God in changing the heart. *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.* Zealously maintain the final perseverance of the believer. *I give them eternal life and they shall never perish.* Let the resurrection of the dead be brought to view as of infinite importance, knowing that preaching and faith are vain without it. Keep not back the final separation of the righteous and the wicked. *He that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned.* Take heed to those things, as the honor of God, the comfort of saints, and the hope of sinners, can only be supported by them. Take heed to the doctrine of baptism. Never admit one to this ordinance, till thou art fully persuaded he is a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, my brother, I charge thee to take the BIBLE for

the rule of thy faith and practice; teach nothing which that will not support. Give thyself to meditation and prayer—live near to God, be much in thy closet; to come from thence to the pulpit, will be more comfortable to thy own mind, and beneficial to them that hear thee.

May the great Shepherd enable thee to attend to these things, make thee useful till death, and finally give thee the reward of a faithful servant, Amen.

Right hand of Fellowship, by the Rev. JOEL BRIGGS.

DEAR BROTHER,

The part assigned me by the council of churches, on the solemn, but joyful transactions of this day, is, in their behalf to express our mutual approbation, and Fellowship in your consecration to the work of the Ministry; and the Pastoral charge of this part of Zion.

Dear Brother, as we have had an opportunity of hearing the declaration of your faith in Christ; system of doctrine, and call to the sacred work, we do most cheerfully accept it.

As the Apostles in separating their brethren to the great work of the ministry; not only laid hands on them, but gave them the right hand, as a cordial token of their fellowship; and prayers for their success.

In imitation of apostolic practice, with warm affection, I present you, Brother, with the right hand. Accept it as a token of our friendship and love, as also, of our fraternal Fellowship with you, in the arduous, but delightful work of preaching the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ.

We therefore bid you welcome to the sacred office, with our fervent and best wishes, that GOD would strengthen you by his Almighty power, to discharge the important trust to divine acceptance, and to the winning of many souls to your blessed and adorable master, so that at last you may shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever, Amen.

FINIS.